

Irish John Willson United Empire Loyalist Family Fonds

1772-1978 (non-inclusive)

RG 169-2

Brock University Archives

Creator:	Maclean Family members
Extent:	0.78m textual material part of 1 large format storage box
Abstract:	This fonds contains materials relating to the family of Irish John Willson. The bulk of the materials contains correspondence, financial records; including deeds, indentures, insurance papers. The collection also contains photographs as well as personal and military ephemera and some items of realia.
Materials:	Deeds, grants, and certificates.
Repository:	Brock University Archives
Processed by:	Jen Goul
Last updated:	November 2007
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Preferred Citation:	RG 169, Irish John Willson United Empire Loyalist Family Fonds, 1772-1978, n.d., Brock University Archives.
Acquisition Info.:	This fonds was donated by Alexis MacLean Newton on March 9, 2006; on behalf of herself, the estate of Sheila Jean MacLean, Jamie Paige Anderson and Ruth Jones.
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History:	John Willson first came to Upper Canada along with his friend Nathaniel Pettit in the late 1700s. They both moved with their families from New Jersey where they had both been imprisoned for not siding with the rebels and maintaining Loyalist allegiances. Pettit arrived with his four daughters, leaving his son behind. Willson came with his wife and nine children. Willson received 1200 acres of land as well as 200 per child. He settled at the corner of Dorchester road and Thorold Stone Road, where he and his family did very well for themselves. Willson as well as his son Thomas ran ox-teams on the portage. His son John became the

proprietor of the Exchange hotel at Niagara, and Charles operated at the Pavilion hotel at Falls View.

Shortly after his arrival in Upper Canada John Willson changed his name to "Irish" John Willson, as there were 5 other "John Willsons" which appeared on the Loyalists lists. Irish John drowned in the Niagara River in 1798, and his family continued to thrive in Niagara after his death. His second son Thomas Willson, married Abigail Pettit, daughter of his Father's friend Nathaniel. Thomas was awarded 250 acres of land as a Loyalist and 200 for Abigail, as she was the daughter of a loyalist. He became a blacksmith and also operated ox-teams along the portage. He was Assessor for Stamford Township for 1800, 1807, 1820 and 1829. During the years 1808, 1822, 1825, 1826 and 1831 he was a tax collector and overseer of Statute of Labour.

Thomas and Abigail Willson had nine children together. Francis Bond Head Willson of Beaverdams (mentioned throughout the collection) was a great grandson of Thomas and Abigail.

Thomas and his wife are both buried beside the Lundy's Lane United Church.

*for more information on the remaining Willson family please refer to box #1, folders 1-3.

* Genealogical information from a paper prepared by Pearl Wilson and given before the Lundy's Lane Historical Society, May 1945, by Hazel Culp Ferris. Box 1 Folder 1.

Scope and Content: The fonds contain materials mainly relating to the Willson and Cowan families from the late 1700s until mid 1940s. The materials included are clippings, correspondence, publications, military ephemera, realia and photographs.

All information in this fonds was kept in the original folder order in which it arrived, no materials were moved or inter-filed with others. This accounts for the repetition of some folder headings within series (for example in the series correspondence there are numerous folders titled correspondence with different dates). All folders were however arranged into the various series in order to intellectually and physically place like materials together, thus allowing for easier access of materials.

The spelling of the last name Willson was recorded as found on the documents. At times it is spelt with the double 'l' and others with the single.

The collection is divided into one series, large format storage. The materials were placed in alphabetical order within a series and chronological order within designated titles.

Organization: The records were arranged into one series:

Series I. Large Format Storage, 1773-1941, n.d. (non-inclusive)

Inventory:

Series I. Large Format Storage, 1773-1941, n.d. (non-inclusive)
Includes; land grants/deeds/transfers etc.

- 1.1 Bond for Deed, 1856, between Thomas Wilson and Robert Smith in the sum of \$200 for land. Witnessed by John Whitelaw (?)
- 1.2 Crown Deed, for 200 acres of land given to Thomas Willson by George the Third, 1797.
- 1.3 2nd Degree Mason certificate, William Cowan, 1920
- 1.4 Degree of Truth, 1911, for William H. Cowan for the Grand Lodge of Ontario Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The Livingstone Lodge No. 130 at Merritton.
- 1.5 Indenture, 1801, between John Thompson and Thomas Willson, recorded 1817.
- 1.6 Indenture, 1848, between William Hamilton Merritt and John Rannie. Contains William Hamilton Merritt's signature.
- 1.7 Indenture Memorial, 1853, between William Davis and Thomas Willson. Witnessed by Malcom Swayze.
- 1.8 Insurance Papers, 1871, for Thomas Willson insuring his store and it's contents with the Canada Farmers' Mutual Insurance Company of James Street in Hamilton, Ontario. Policy no. 63060.
- 1.9 Invoice, 1837; showing balance due for rent Thomas Willson Jr. of Beaver Dams from Samuel Street for the years 1832, 1833, 1835-1836
- 1.10 Land Deed, 1834, from William Davis to Thomas Willson for 290 acres.
- 1.11 Land Grant, 1809, to Thomas Willson, John Willson, and John Fannin for 200 acres of land in the Township of Stamford, County of Lincoln, District of Niagara.

- 1.12 Land Transfer Agreement, 1855, between Thomas Willson Sr. and Thomas Willson Jr. Actual transfer dated 1839, recorded 1842.
- 1.13 Mortgage Deed, 1859, between Thomas Willson and Richard Miller.
- 1.14 Rental agreement, 1844, between Thomas Willson and Thomas Dodds for the rental of Willson's farm in Stamford Township for a rate of 25 pounds per year for a term of 4 years. Witnesses John Willson and Olive Willson.
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Subject Access: 600 Willson, John, d. 1798.
610 Maclean Family.
610 Willson Family.
650 United Empire loyalists -- Ontario -- Stamford (Township).
651 Stamford (Ont. : Township) -- History -- Sources.
651 Stamford (Ont. : Township) -- Genealogy.
651 Thorold (Ont. : Township) -- History -- Sources.
651 Thorold (Ont. : Township) -- Genealogy.
700 Willson, Francis Bond Head.
